Harassment to workers due to recession

1413. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether after the slowdown of economy Indians are being harassed/tortured by various country natives so that they may leave their country;

(b) if so, the number of overseas Indians that have already come back and whether it would have adverse impact on our economy; and

(c) the strategy of Indian Government to address this situation?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Unscrupulous agents of visa trade

1414. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of unscrupulous agents engaged in visa trade;

(b) if so, the action proposed against them; and

(c) the countries that have reached agreements to protect interest of Indian workers, the details and outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) There have been instances of unscrupulous agents involved in malpractices relating to recruitment for employment abroad. Whenever such information is received, the State Police concerned is requested to investigate and prosecute the offenders under the Emigration Act. Where a registered recruiting agent is involved, action is taken for suspension/cancellation of the registration.

(c) India had signed Labour agreements with Jordan and Qatar in 1980s. The Ministry, after its creation in 2004, made concerted efforts to enter into bilateral Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the major receiving Countries for ensuring protection and welfare of our emigrants. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) were signed with United Arab of Emirates (UAE) in December, 2006, the Kuwait in April, 2007, with Oman in November, 2008, with Malaysia in January, 2009, and with Bahrain on 17th June, 2009. An Additional Protocol to the existing Labour Agreement between India and Qatar was signed in November, 2007. The MoUs generally provide for bilateral cooperation in the protection and welfare of workers, for the host country taking measures to protect the workers in the unorganized sector, for the broad procedures that the foreign employers should follow for recruitment of Indian workers and for the terms of employment to be in conformity with the laws of the countries. Joint Working Groups are also constituted to meet periodically to ensure implementation of the MoUs and solve bilateral issues.